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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: D. B. Modesitt, et al.

Serial No.: 09/651,344

Filed: August 29, 2000

For: ARTICULATING SUTURING
DEVICE AND METHOD

Attorney Docket No.: 6771.US.D1

Art Unit: 3731

Examiner: J. Woo

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Matthew H. Mader 3/4/04
Matthew H. Mader Date

Commissioner For Patents
P.O. BOX 1450
Alexandria VA, 22314

After Final Amendment

Dear Sir:

In response to the Office Action of November 7, 2003, please amend the above-
identified application as follows, and consider the remarks below. Reconsideration of
this application is respectfully requested.

Amendments to the Claims – are reflected in the listing of the claims which
begins on page 2.

Remarks begin on page 8

Amendment After Final
Attorney Docket Number: 6771USD1
March 4, 2004

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element through the vessel wall on the one side of the aperture and the end of the suture element has engaged with the end of the filament [connection element] and the other needle has been passed through the vessel wall on the opposed side of the aperture and has engaged the opposed end of the filament [connection element], the suture element can be passed through the vessel wall in response to the other needle drawing the filament [connection element] through the vessel wall on the opposed side of the aperture.

82. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 81, wherein the body comprises a shaft portion arranged to be passed through the aperture in the vessel wall.

83. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 82, which comprises an elongate foot formation on the shaft portion, the foot formation being selectively displaceable between a low profile condition, in which the foot is generally aligned with the shaft, and a deployed condition, in which the foot extends generally [laterally] at an angle relative to the shaft.

84. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 83, wherein the filament [connection element] is [mounted] disposed on the foot formation such that the filament [connection element] extends across the aperture when the shaft portion has been passed through the aperture and the foot formation has been displaced into [its] the deployed position.

85-91. (Canceled)

92. (Currently Amended) A method for suturing a puncture in a blood vessel wall, the method comprising:

providing a first needle carrying a suture element, the suture element having a first end and a bight spaced from said first end;
advancing the first end of the suture element through the blood vessel wall adjacent the puncture with the first needle;
coupling the first end of the suture element to a filament [connection element];
providing a second needle;
advancing the second needle through the blood vessel wall adjacent the puncture;
coupling the second needle to the filament [connection element];
pulling the second needle, filament [connection element], and first end of the suture element through the bight to form a knot; and
tensioning the suture to affix the suture across the puncture.

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92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, further comprising providing a shaft, said first and second needles advanceable along said shaft, said bight being releasably attached to said shaft, and advancing said shaft through a tissue tract of a patient body.